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ABSTRACT

Findings of a survey of a sample of center-based child care programs and private home day care (PHDC) agencies listed in Ontario's Direct Operating Grant Calculation Data Base are summarized. During 1988, licensed child care programs in Ontario received approximately 46.5 million dollars in Direct Operating Grants. Grants were distributed among 2,302 center-based programs and 79 home day care agencies. Objectives of the survey were: (1) to determine the amounts that went to increased salaries, the positions of staff who received a portion of the grant and how much these staff received, and positions of staff who did not receive a portion of the grant and reasons why they did not receive a portion; (2) to determine the frequency of use of grants for purposes not related to salary use and the reasons for such uses; and (3) to gather information on the methods used by the programs to distribute the grants. Findings are reported in six categories: (1) percentage of grant dollars allocated for selected uses; (2) percentage of grant dollars allocated by program; (3) the impact of direct operation grants on salaries alone, and on salaries and benefits combined; (4) use of direct operating grants for purposes not related to salary; (5) implementation issues related to direct operating grant distribution, approvals, and workload; and (6) union involvement in direct operating grant distribution. Conclusions are reported. (RH)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
A SHORT TERM EVALUATION OF THE DIRECT OPERATING GRANTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

APPROACH

The approach to this study involved the design and execution of a self report survey from a sample of non-profit and profit centre-based programs and Private Home Day Care Agencies listed on the Direct Operating Grant Calculation Data Base.

It should be noted that the Ministry had requested child care programs to report on their planned and actual dollar amounts and usage of the grant in 1988, as part of its on-going monitoring of the Direct Operating Grant Program. This process requested programs to provide similar pieces of information as the survey - although not as in-depth as this investigation.

The survey was undertaken in May, June and July of 1989. A follow up telephone survey to 10% of non respondents was administered in the last week of July, as a means to ascertain the effort required to increase response.

When the response rate and time and effort required to continue the survey were balanced against the corroborating information available from the monitoring process, it was decided to cut off the survey on July 31, 1989.

After adjustments for program closures, unqualified responses (ie; did not receive a Direct Operating Grant in 1988, no longer at the address etc.), the table below details the total mail outs, the total returns and the final response rates at the time of survey cut-off.

Total Mail Outs, Returns and Response Rates by Auspice

Auspice	Mail-Outs	Returns	Response Rate
Municipal	69	45	65%
Non-Profit	693	310	45%
Profit	307	106	35%
Private Home Day Care	79	43	54%

PRIMARY FINDINGS : CENTRE-BASED PROGRAMS

1. PERCENTAGE OF GRANT DOLLARS ALLOCATED FOR SELECTED USES

Overall Salary Allocations

- Overall, the centre-based sample accounts for approximately $10.5 million in 1988 Direct Operating Grant allocations, which is approximately 23% of the total allocation of $46.5 million.

  In total, 85% of the Direct Operating Grant dollars were used to augment salaries and benefits across this sample.

  72% was allocated to augment full time salaries and 6% for full time benefits. A further 7% was used to augment part time salaries and .3% to assist with part time benefits.

  See Figure 1

- Fully 91% of all staff in the sample received a portion of the Direct Operating Grant - 96% of full time staff and 79% of part time staff.

Overall Non Salary Allocations

- 15% of Direct Operating Grant dollars were used for non salary purposes.

- Across all programs, the primary types of non salary use included offsetting operating expenses (24% of non salary dollars), transitional grant reduction (22% of non salary dollars) and "affordability" (21% of non salary dollars).

2. PERCENTAGE OF GRANT DOLLARS ALLOCATED BY PROGRAM

Salary Allocations By Program

- Non-profit programs allocated approximately 86% of the Direct Operating Grant to salaries and benefits of full and part time staff - 70% to full time salaries, 4% to full time benefits; 12% to part time salaries and .4% to part time benefits.

- Municipalities distributed 81% of the Direct Operating Grant to full and part time salaries and benefits - 70% to full time salaries, 9% to full time benefits; 2% to part time salaries and .2% to part time benefits.

- On the other hand, profit programs distributed 99% of their Direct Operating Grant to salaries and benefits - 86% to full time salaries, 5% to full time benefits; 8% to part time salaries and .2% to part time benefits.

See Figures 2, 3, 4

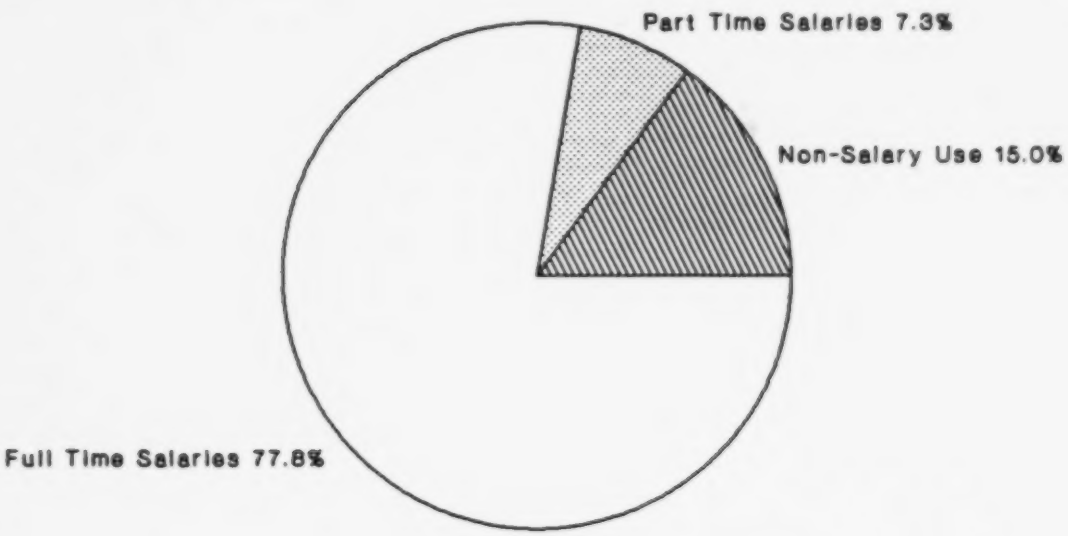
Non Salary Allocations By Program

- Non-Profit programs allocated 14% of their Direct Operating Dollars to non-salary uses - municipalities 19% and profit programs only .5%.

Figure 1

USES OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT

CENTRE BASED PROGRAMS ONLY

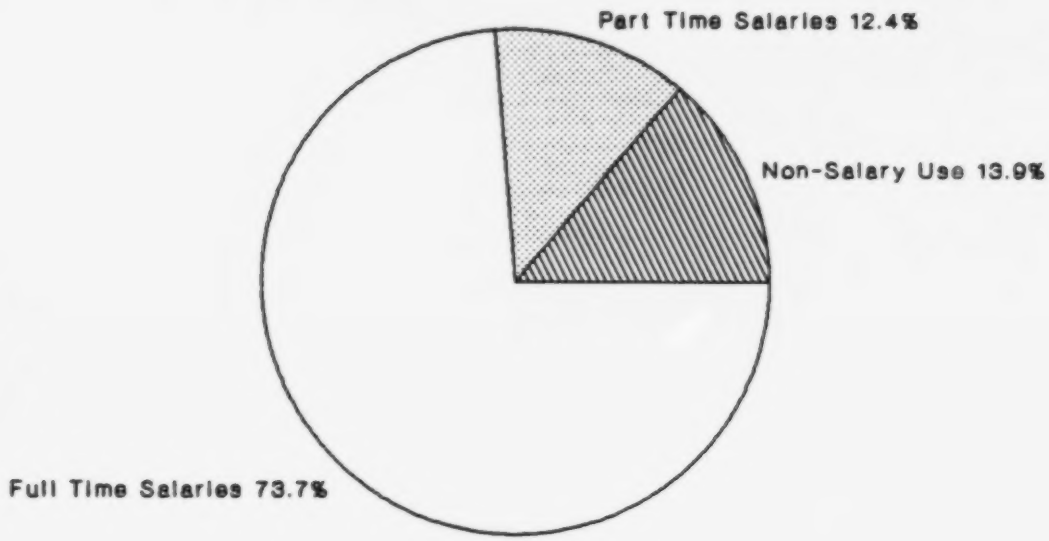


The Pie Displays The Percentage Of Direct Operating Grant Dollars Used For Each Purpose

Figure 2

USES OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT

NON-PROFIT CENTRE BASED PROGRAMS ONLY

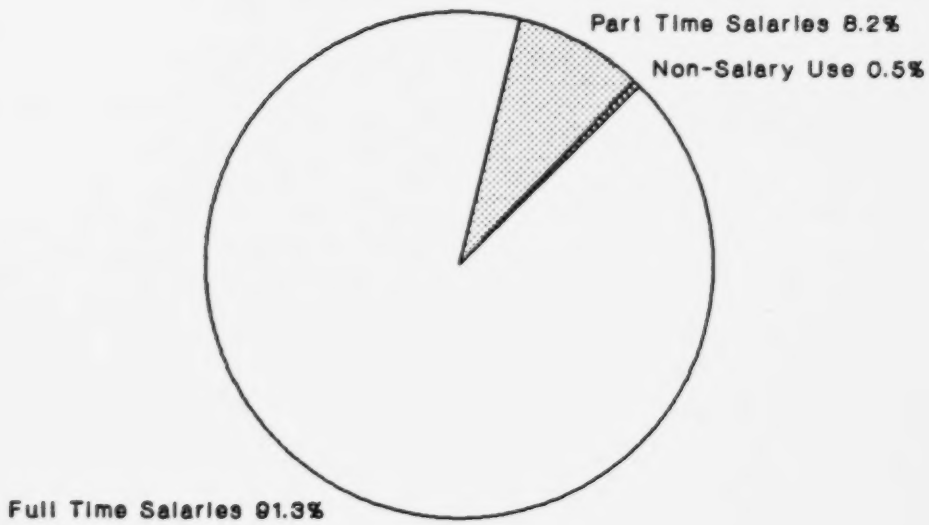


The Pie Displays The Percentage Of Direct Operating Grant Dollars Used For Each Purpose

Figure 3

USES OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT

PROFIT CENTRE BASED PROGRAMS ONLY

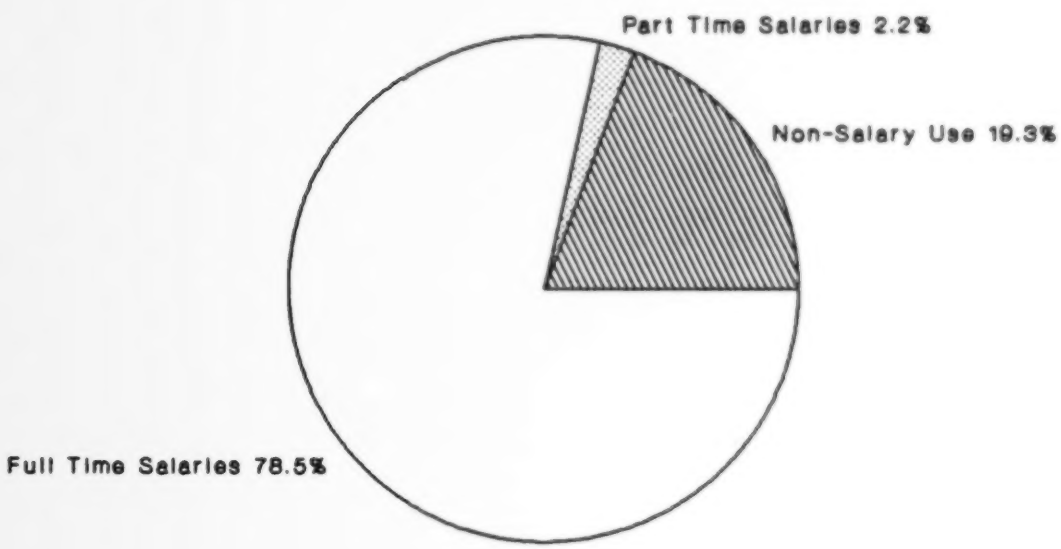


The Pie Displays The Percentage Of Direct Operating Grant Dollars Used For Each Purpose

Figure 4

USES OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT

MUNICIPAL CENTRE BASED PROGRAMS ONLY



The Pie Displays The Percentage Of Direct Cperating Grant Dollars Used For Each Purpose

3. IMPACT OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANTS ON SALARIES

As mentioned, 85% of the Direct Operating Grant dollars were used to supplement salaries and benefits across the sample.

When supplementing salaries, child care programs used the Direct Operating Grant in two ways. In the first case, the grant was used to supplement salaries only. In the second case the grant was used to supplement salaries and benefits. Results are presented for each situation.

Overall Impact On Salaries When The Direct Operating Grant Was Used To Supplement Salaries Only

- Among those programs that used the Direct Operating Grant TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES ONLY, the grant increased full time salaries by an average of approximately $2,813 across ALL non-profit agencies (including municipalities) and $1,420 in profit agencies. In fact, profit programs consistently report salary increases approximately half that of non-profit programs.

- The highest percentage increase in full time staff salaries occurred within ALL non-profit programs at 18%, relative to profit programs at 12%.

- Considering part time salaries, the average increase was $1,099 across ALL non-profit agencies and $578 among profit agencies. This is a 21% increase for ALL non-profit agencies and a 12% increase within profit settings.

See Figure 5

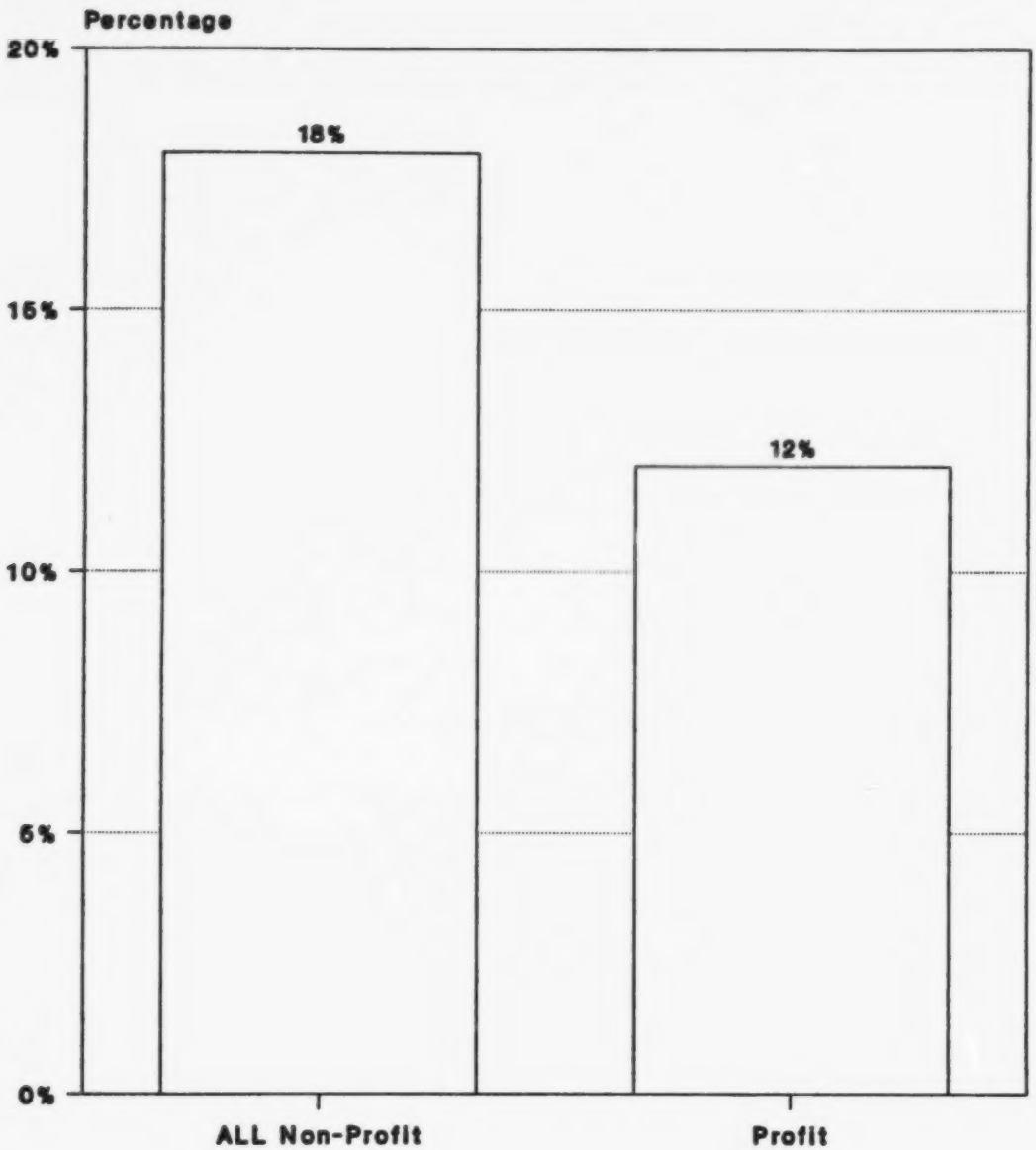
Overall Impact On Salaries When The Direct Operating Grant Was Used To Supplement Salaries and Benefits

- Among those programs that used the Direct Operating Grant TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES AND BENEFITS, the grant increased full time salaries by an average of $2,931 among ALL non-profit agencies and $1,318 within profit agencies.

  The Direct Operating Grant further assisted with full time benefits an average of $428 within ALL non-profit agencies and $185 for profit agencies.

Percentage Increase in Full Time Salary
(Centre Based Programs)

Figure 5



Numbers are for programs supplementing salaries only as opposed to salaries AND benefits

Thus, among programs that used the Direct Operating Grant FOR FULL TIME SALARIES AND BENEFITS, the average increase in full time staff remuneration was $3,358 within ALL non-profit settings and $1,566 in profit agencies.

This translates into a 20% increase among ALL non-profit and a 13% increase among the profit programs.

With respect to part time salaries, ALL non-profit programs reported an average increase of $1,192 in part time salaries and $203 in benefits - for a total of $1,319. Profit programs reported an average increase of $517 in part time salaries and $84 in benefits - totalling $601. This represents a 25% increase for ALL non-profit agencies and a 12% increase in the profit settings.

4. DIRECT OPERATING GRANT USAGE FOR NON SALARY PURPOSES

- As stated above, only 15% of all Direct Operating Grant dollars were used for non-salary purposes.
- Only 4% OF THE PROGRAMS reported using the Direct Operating Grant EXCLUSIVELY FOR NON SALARY PURPOSES.
- Yet, 28% of programs reported using the Direct Operating Grant for a COMBINATION OF NON-SALARY AND SALARY PURPOSES.
- The primary reasons for using the Direct Operating Grant on non salary items were the perception that non salary uses had a higher priority (20%), that existing salaries and benefits were adequate (20%) or that the maximum allowable amounts of the grant had been allocated, and because of staff turnover or other reasons, a surplus was left for non-salary use (10%).
- Programs that used the grant for SALARY INCREASES ONLY reported a slightly lower average grant amount for this purpose compared to programs that used the funding for SALARIES AND BENEFITS. However, programs that used the grant for SALARIES ONLY allocated a higher percentage of their grant dollars for NON SALARY USE (29%) relative to the programs supplementing SALARIES AND BENEFITS (5%).

5. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES RELATED TO DIRECT OPERATING GRANT DISTRIBUTION, APPROVALS AND WORKLOAD

- Centre-based programs implemented a variety of criteria in distributing the grant, from the job level/position, to a flat rate increase, to educational qualifications and seniority.

- The grants were given almost equally as a bonus (43%), a base salary increase (38%) or a combination of bonus and salary increase (14%).

- Approvals for the grant were made most often by the board of directors/owner operator or by the board/owner in combination with the agency director or program staff. The grant was usually administered by board/operator or the treasurer/bookkeeper.

- A number of programs also reported that the guidelines for distribution of the grant were not clear. They felt that this situation could be ameliorated if the "implementation/allocation formula" were standardized across the province.

- In addition, 63% of programs felt the grant increased their workload when it was introduced and 41% report the workload has increased on an on-going basis.

6. UNION INVOLVEMENT IN DIRECT OPERATING GRANT DISTRIBUTION

- Approximately 11% of all centre-based programs in the sample were unionized.

- Among those that were unionized, 53% reported the union involved in the grant distribution. Of these, 24% reported that the union wanted the grant distributed to non-child care staff (eg; in multi-service centres, municipalities etc.).

- Overall, this translates into 6% of programs where the union was involved and 1% where the union wanted the grant allocated to non-child care staff.

PRIMARY FINDINGS : PRIVATE HOME DAY CARE AGENCIES

THE NUMBER OF CASES FOR PROFIT ORIENTED PHDCS IS SMALL. THESE RESULTS SHOULD BE INTERPRETED WITH CAUTION.

1. PERCENTAGE OF GRANT DOLLARS ALLOCATED FOR SELECTED USES

Overall Provider Payment and Salary Allocations

- In this study, PHDCs account for approximately $3.4 million in 1988 Direct Operating Grant allocations. This translates into approximately 7% of the $46.5 million dollar allocation in 1988.

  Overall, 89% of PHDC Direct Operating Grant dollars were used to augment provider payments, salaries or benefits.

  68% of grant dollars were allocated to augment provider payments, 18% for full time salaries and 2% for full time benefits. A further 1% was allocated to assist with part time salaries and .3% for part time benefits.

  See Figure 6

- Virtually 100% of providers, 80% of full time staff and 69% of part time staff in the sampled PHDCs received a portion of the grant.

Overall Non-Salary Allocations

- Among the sampled PHDCs, 11% of Direct Operating Grant dollars were used for non-salary purposes.

- The primary types of non salary use included transitional grant reduction (50% of non-salary dollars) and staff training (21% of non-salary dollars).

2. **PERCENTAGE OF GRANT DOLLARS ALLOCATED BY PROGRAM**

Provider Payments and Salary Allocations By Program

- Both non-profit and profit PHDCs allocated approximately 68% of grant dollars to provider payments.

- Non-profit PHDCs allocated approximately 21% of the Direct Operating Grant to salaries and benefits of full and part time staff - 18% to full time salaries, 2% to full time benefits; 1% to part time salaries and .3% to part time benefits.

- Profit PHDCs distributed 31% of their Direct Operating Grant to salaries and benefits - 30% to full time salaries and 1% to full time benefits.

- Within this sample, NO PROFIT PHDCs reported using the Direct Operating Grant for part time salaries and benefits.

See Figures 7, 8

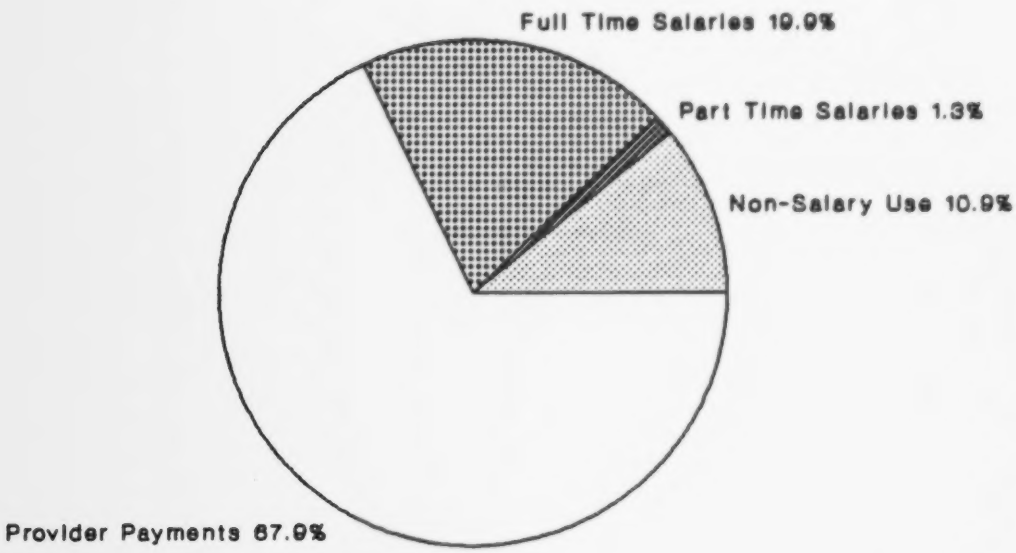
Non Salary Allocations By Program

- Non-profit PHDCs used 11% of their Direct Operating Grant dollars for non-salary uses. Profit programs used .5%.

Figure 6

USES OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT

PHDC PROGRAMS ONLY

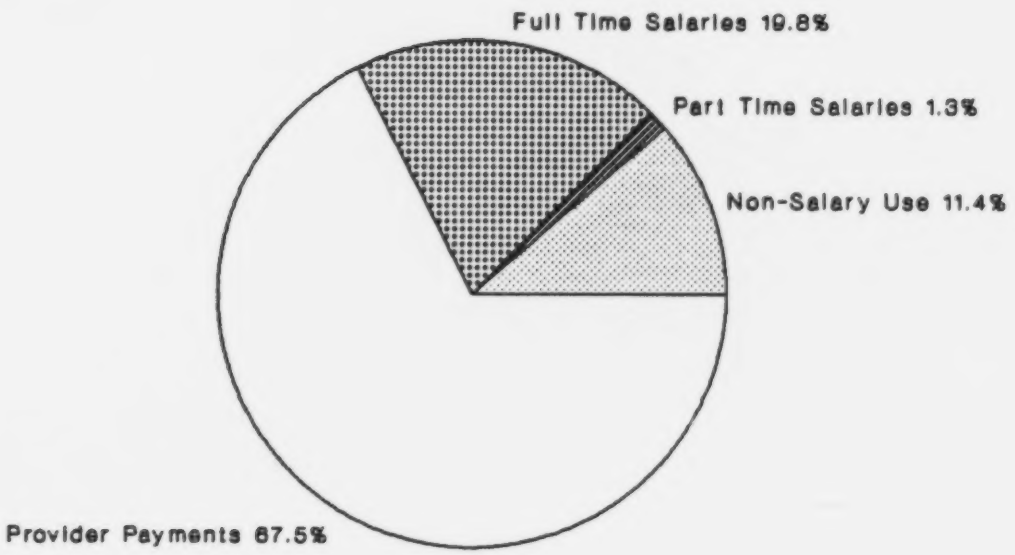


The Pie Displays The Percentage Of Direct Operating Grant Dollars Used For Each Purpose

Figure 7

USES OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT

NON PROFIT PHDCS

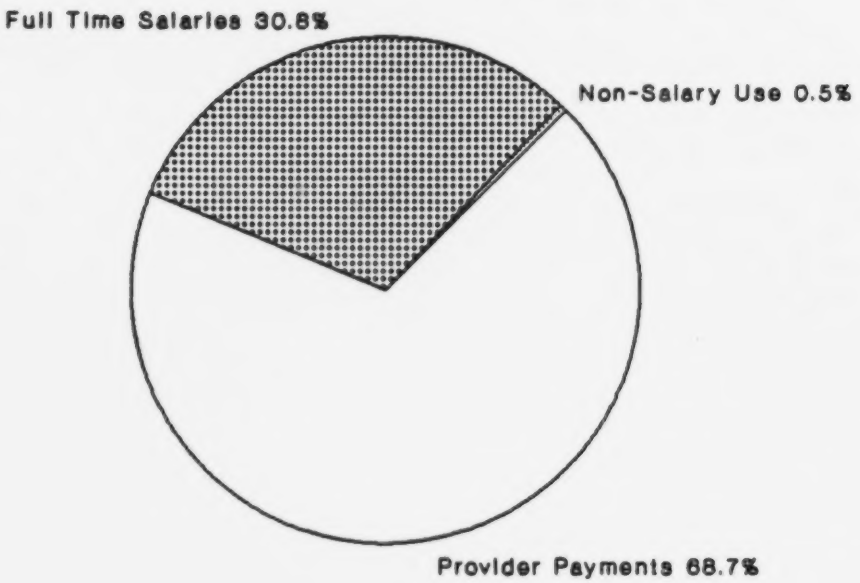


The Pie Displays The Percentage Of Direct Operating Grant Dollars Used For Each Purpose

Figure 8

USES OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT

PHDC PROFIT PROGRAMS



The Pie Displays The Percentage Of Direct Operating Grant Dollars Used For Each Purpose

3. IMPACT OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT ON PROVIDER PAYMENTS

Overall Impact On Provider Payments

- As stated, 68% of PHDC Direct Operating Grant dollars were distributed to providers.

Impact On Provider Payments By Program

- On average, non-profit PHDCs provided a higher provider payment increase ($721) relative to profit programs ($290).
- On a percentage basis, provider payments increased by 14% for non-profit PHDCs and 6% for profit PHDCs.

See Figure 9

4. IMPACT OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT ON PHDC STAFF SALARIES

PHDCs used 22% of their Direct Operating Grant dollars to supplement salaries and benefits of full and part time staff.

As with centre-based programs, they distributed the Grant in two ways. In the first case, the grant was used to supplement salaries only, and in the second to supplement salaries and benefits. Results are presented for each situation.

Overall Impact When The Direct Operating Grant Was Used To Supplement Salaries Only

- Considering the PHDCs that used the Direct Operating Grant TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES ONLY, the grant increased full time salaries among non-profit PHDCs an average of $2,692, relative to profit programs at $2,010[1].

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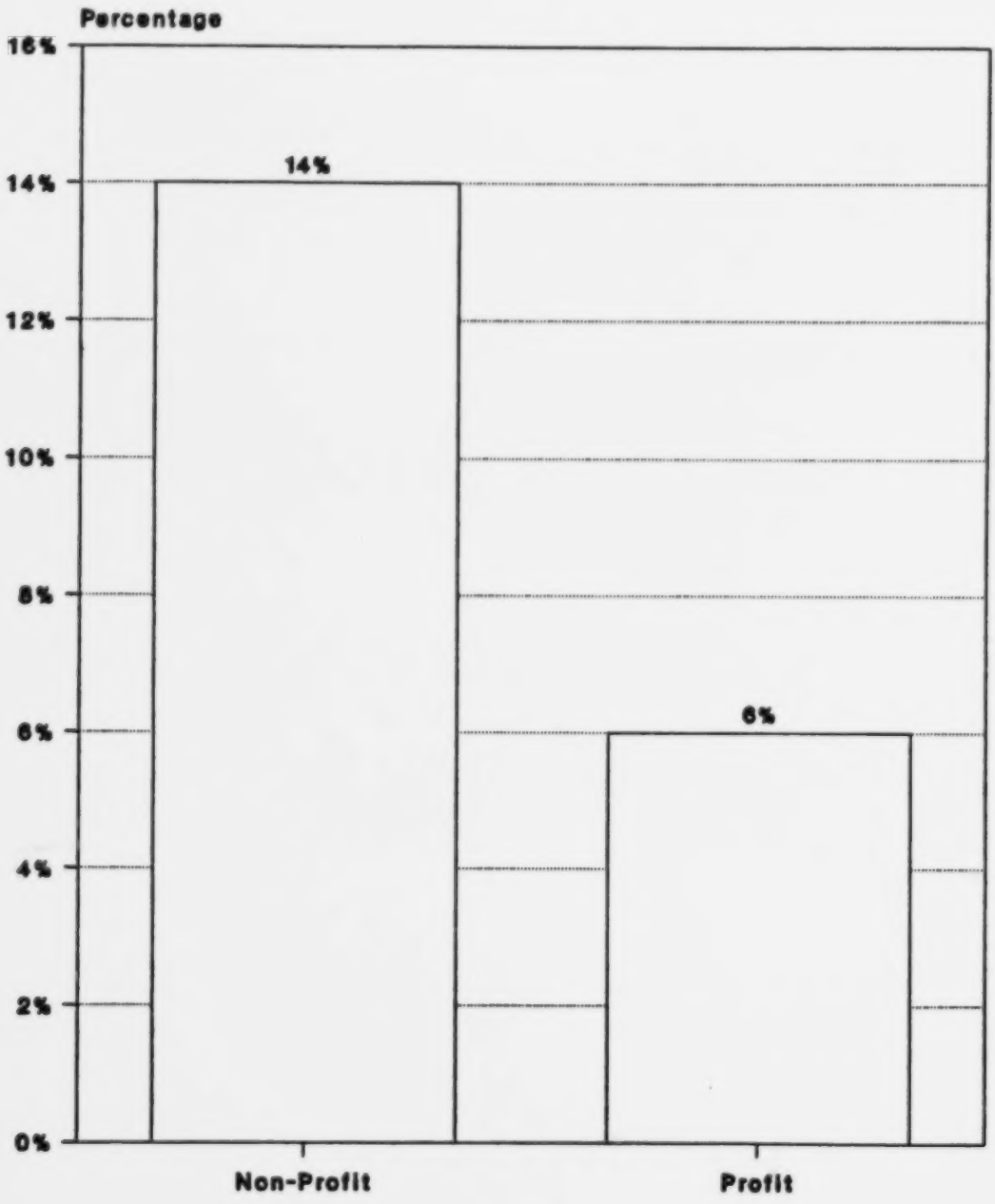
[1] Profit PHDCs received only one half the Direct Operating Grant of non-profit agencies. Yet, profit PHDCs allotted a larger percentage of their Direct Operating Grant dollars to FULL TIME STAFF SALARIES compared to non-profit. As a result, the average Direct Operating Grant to full time staff in profit PHDCs was greater than one half that received by full time non-profit staff.

Figure 9

Percentge Increase In Provider Payments



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Overall Impact When The Direct Operating Grant Was Used To Supplement Salaries And Benefits

- Among PHDCs that used the Direct Operating Grant TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES AND BENEFITS, the grant increased full time salaries among the non-profit agencies by $2,969, and by $2,009 among profit agencies.

  The Direct Operating Grant further assisted with full time benefits an average of $549 among non-profit PHDCs and $164 for the profit agencies.

- This means that non-profit PHDCs report the highest Direct Operating Grant increases for full time staff at $3,519 relative to profit PHDCs ($2,172).

- In non-profit settings this represents a 14% increase, and a 17% increase in profit agencies.

5. DIRECT OPERATING GRANT USAGE FOR NON SALARY PURPOSES AMONG PHDCs

- As stated, 11% of the Direct Operating Grant dollars were used by PHDCs for non-salary purposes.

- In this sample, NO PHDCs reported using the Direct Operating Grant exclusively for non salary purposes.

- Yet, 42% of PHDCs used the Direct Operating Grant for a combination of non-salary and salary purposes.

- The primary reasons PHDCs used the Direct Operating Grant on non salary items were that the non salary uses were perceived to have a higher priority (30%), that existing salaries and benefits were adequate (20%) and to reduce staff training costs (10%).

6. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES REGARDING DIRECT OPERATING GRANT DISTRIBUTION, APPROVALS AND WORKLOAD

- As with centre-based programs, PHDCs implemented a variety of criteria in distributing the grant, from the hours of care provided to job level/position, to a flat rate increase.

- PHDCs tended to allocate the grant to full time staff equally as a bonus (41%) or salary (44%), a combination of bonus and salary (1%) or in some other way (9%). Providers received the grant as a bonus (36%), increased rates (29%) or in some other way (31%).

- The grant distributions were approved most often by the municipal council/ board of education/ board of regents, the board and agency director, the board of directors/ owner operator only, and the board of directors/ program staff.

- As before, a number of PHDCs also reported that the guidelines for distribution of the Direct Operating Grant were not clear and that "the Grant implementation/ allocation formula" should be standardized.

- In addition, 76% of PHDCs felt the grant increased their workload when it was introduced and 57% report the workload increased on an on-going basis.

7. UNION INVOLVEMENT IN DIRECT OPERATING GRANT DISTRIBUTION IN PHDCS

- 21% of all PHDCs in the sample were unionized.

- 53% of the unionized PHDCs reported the union involved in the grant distribution; of which 100% reported that the union wanted the grant distributed to non child care staff.

- Overall, 12% of PHDCs had the union involved in grant distribution and, for all of them, the union wanted the grant allocated to non-child care staff.

PRIMARY CONCLUSIONS : CENTRE-BASED PROGRAMS

1. DIRECT OPERATING GRANT USAGE FOR SALARY AND BENEFITS AMONG CENTRE-BASED PROGRAMS

We can conclude that the direct operating grant was clearly used to supplement either salaries OR salaries and benefits of child care staff in the sample, given the vast majority of grant dollars were allocated to this purpose - and that over 90% of staff received a portion.

We can further conclude that sampled child care programs did, in fact, address salary and benefit improvements as a first priority - thus properly reflecting the 1988 guidelines and procedures associated with the grant.

2. DIRECT OPERATING GRANT USAGE FOR NON SALARY PURPOSES

In the first year of the Direct Operating Grant Program, we can conclude that only a small proportion of the dollars were used for non salary purposes (15%). Although 28% of Programs used some amount of the direct operating grant for non salary purposes, only 4% of programs employed the grant exclusively for non salary use.

The non salary monies were used primarily to offset operating expenditures, for transitional grant reduction or "affordability".

This finding is further confirmation that child care programs dealt with salary and benefit improvements as a first priority - again properly reflecting the first year guidelines associated with grant use.

Fully, 99% of the Grant dollars were allocated to provider payments, plus salaries and benefits of staff in profit oriented agencies. This is the highest percentage allocation to staff/ provider payments among all agency types. Given this, we can conclude that profit programs did as well as non-profit programs in allocating Grant dollars to agency personnel.

3. IMPACT ON SALARIES WHEN THE DIRECT OPERATING GRANT WAS USED TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES ONLY (AS OPPOSED TO SALARIES AND BENEFITS)

In the cases where the Direct Operating Grant was used TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES ONLY, we can conclude it has increased salaries for full time staff by approximately $2,813 (18%) across ALL non-profit agencies (including municipalities) and by $1,420 (12%) in profit agencies. The grant increased average salaries for part time staff by $1,099 (21%) across ALL non-profit agencies and $578 (12%) among profit agencies.

We can also conclude that the largest percentage increases occurred among non-profit programs due again to the lower relative salaries paid to non-profit child care workers and thus the larger relative increase to salary as a result of the grant. Further, average increases to salaries for the profit sector were approximately half that of non-profit programs.

Given the above findings, in conjunction with the fact that 92% of respondents felt the grant had improved salary and benefit levels in child care (with almost 60% reporting it had greatly improved levels), we can conclude that the Direct Operating Grant has had a meaningful, positive impact on the salary and benefit levels of staff in the child care sector in its first year of operation.

4. IMPACT ON SALARIES WHEN THE DIRECT OPERATING GRANT WAS USED TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES AND BENEFITS

In situations where the Direct Operating Grant was used TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES AND BENEFITS, we can conclude it has augmented average salaries for full time staff by $3,358 (20%) within ALL non-profit settings and by $1,566 (13%) in profit agencies. Further, the grant augmented average salaries for part time staff by $1,319 (25%) in ALL non-profit agencies and by $601 (12%) in profit agencies.

We can also conclude that the largest percentage increases occurred among non-profit programs. One reason for this is the lower relative salaries paid to non-profit child care workers and thus, the larger relative increases as a result of the grant.

Average increases to salaries for the profit sector were approximately half that of non-profit programs. This is consistent with the 50% of the grant received by profit programs.

We can further conclude that the grant has had an equitable impact on staff income, whether it was distributed as salary only or a combination of salary and benefits - given the similar grant amounts received and the similar percentage increases in both situations.

SECONDARY CONCLUSIONS : CENTRE-BASED PROGRAMS

1. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES REGARDING DIRECT OPERATING GRANT DISTRIBUTION, APPROVALS AND WORKLOAD

Grants were given almost equally as a bonus or salary increase, and approvals were usually made by the board/ owner or by the board in conjunction with staff.

We can conclude that centre-based child care programs used a variety of criteria and methods to distribute and actually pay the grant to staff.

We can also conclude that the distribution of the grant has increased the workload for over 40% of agencies and the interpretation and implementation of the guidelines has been a source of confusion and administrative complexity for a number of programs. The ministry could possibly investigate ways to ameliorate this situation.

2. UNION INVOLVEMENT IN DIRECT OPERATING GRANT DISTRIBUTION

We can conclude that within the non-profit and profit sectors, the role played by the union in the distribution of the direct operating grant was minimal, primarily due to the low level of unionization in these sectors.

However, in over half the settings where there were unions, the union was involved in the distribution of grant dollars.

PRIMARY CONCLUSIONS : PRIVATE HOME DAY CARE AGENCIES

1. DIRECT OPERATING GRANT USAGE FOR PROVIDER PAYMENTS, SALARY AND BENEFITS AMONG PHDCs

We can conclude that the direct operating grant was clearly used by PHDCs to supplement provider payments and the salaries and benefits of staff in the sample - given the vast majority of dollars allocated to this purpose, and that 80% of full time staff and 100% of providers received a portion.

We can further conclude that PHDCs did address salary and benefit improvements as a first priority - thus properly reflecting the guidelines and procedures connected with the grant.

2. DIRECT OPERATING GRANT USAGE FOR NON SALARY PURPOSES AMONG PHDCs

We can again conclude that in the first year of the Direct Operating Grant Program, only a small proportion of the dollars were used by PHDCs for non salary purposes (11%). Although 42% of programs used some amount of the direct operating grant for non salary purposes, NO PHDCs employed the grant exclusively for non salary use.

The non salary monies were used primarily for transitional grant reduction and staff training.

This finding again confirms that PHDCs dealt with salary, benefit and provider payments as a first priority - properly reflecting the first year guidelines and procedures associated with grant use.

3. IMPACT OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT ON PROVIDER PAYMENTS

In cases where the Direct Operating Grant was used TO SUPPLEMENT PROVIDER PAYMENTS, we can conclude it has increased average payments by $721 in non-profit settings and $290 in profit agencies.

Non-profit PHDC providers saw their payments increase by 14% relative to 6% for profit PHDC providers.

Further, 90% of PHDC respondents felt the grant had improved provider payments. This fact, combined with the payment increases, leads us again to conclude that the Direct Operating Grant has had a positive impact on provider payments in PHDCs.

4. IMPACT OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT ON SALARIES WHEN USED TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES ONLY

In cases where the Direct Operating Grant was used TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES ONLY, we can conclude it has increased full time salaries among non-profit PHDCs by an average of $2,692, relative to profit programs at $2,011.

5. IMPACT OF DIRECT OPERATING GRANT ON SALARIES WHEN USED TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES AND BENEFITS

In cases where the Direct Operating Grant was used TO SUPPLEMENT SALARIES AND BENEFITS in PHDCs, we can conclude it has augmented average salaries for full time staff by $3,518 relative to profit PHDCs ($2,172). In the non-profit settings, this was a 14% increase and in the profit agencies a 17% increase.

Given the above findings and the fact that 76% of PHDC respondents felt the grant had improved salary and benefit levels, we can conclude that the Direct Operating Grant has had a positive impact on the salary and benefit levels of staff in PHDCs.

SECONDARY CONCLUSIONS : PRIVATE HOME DAY CARE AGENCIES

1. ISSUES REGARDING DIRECT OPERATING GRANT DISTRIBUTION, APPROVALS AND WORKLOAD

We can conclude that PHDCs used a variety of criteria and methods to distribute and actually pay the grant to staff.

We can conclude that the distribution of the grant has increased the workload for over 57% of PHDCs and the interpretation and implementation of the guidelines again has been a source of confusion and complexity for a number of PHDCs.

2. UNION INVOLVEMENT IN DIRECT OPERATING GRANT DISTRIBUTION IN PHDCS

We can conclude that within PHDCs, the role played by the union in the distribution of the direct operating grant was somewhat minimal, primarily due to the low level of unionization among PHDCs.